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Sturtevant, J. M.

Three months in Great Britain

A lecture on the present situation

England towards the United States,
as determined by personal observation

Chicago, Ill.



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THREE MONTHS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

A LECTURE

ON

THE PRESENT ATTITUDE

OF

England towards the United States,

AS DETERMINED BY PERSONAL OBSERVATION.

BY

J. M. STURTEVANT, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF ILLINOIS COLLEGE.

CHICAGO:

JOHN A. NORTON,

1264 DEARBORN STREET

1864.

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CHICAGO, July 5, 1864.

REV. J. M. STURTEVANT, D. D.,
Jacksonville, Ill.

DEAR SIR—The undersigned desire to express to you their belief that the publication of the Lecture delivered by you in this city on the 28th day of April last, on the sentiments and opinions of the people of Great Britain, relative to the civil strife now going on in this country would meet a demand which has long been felt, and which nothing else known to us so well supplies.

We think it a duty which we owe to ourselves and to our nation not to suffer such an opportunity to pass, without preserving, if possible, in some tangible and permanent form, the views thus offered by you upon a question of so much interest to the American public. We are also persuaded that the publication of your lecture will contribute greatly to the instruction of our people in the duties which they owe to their own government, and lead them to value more highly those political privileges and institutions which that government guarantees to her citizens.

Entertaining these views with regard to your lecture, we would most respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES WALKER,
H. F. MATHER,
LEVI B. TAFT,
C. G. HAMMOND,
GRANT GOODRICH,
H. E. SEELYE,
F. W. FISK,
SAMUEL C. BARTLETT,
H. F. STEELE,
LUTHER HAVEN,
THOS. B. BRYAN,
THOMAS J. TURNER, Freeport, Ills.

L. P. HILLIARD,
J. N. JEWETT,
B. W. RAYMOND,
JOSEPH HAVEN,
E. W. BLATCHFORD,
J. C. BURROUGHS,
E. S. CHESBROUGH,
Z. M. HUMPHREY,
R. W. PATTERSON,
WM. W. PATTON,
E. B. WARD, Detroit, Mich.

ILLINOIS COLLEGE, July 20, 1864.

MESSRS. CHARLES WALKER, H. F. MATHER, AND OTHERS:

GENTLEMEN—I thank you for your kind estimate of my lecture delivered in your city on the 28th of April last. Inasmuch as my own mind underwent considerable changes during my sojourn in Britain, respecting the value of British opinion on American affairs, and the present and prospective relations of England as at present governed to our own country and to universal liberty, I am more than willing to give the reasons of those changes to the American public. I therefore without hesitation place my manuscript at your disposal.

Yours, very respectfully,

J. M. STURTEVANT.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

You will not expect to be entertained to-night with the novel and thrilling incidents of foreign travel. I appear before you for no such purpose, but to report as well as I am able, the results of my observations, during a sojourn of three months in Great Britain, of the existing state of British opinion and feeling toward this country, and to assign what seem to me to be its causes.

I enter on the performance of this task, with a strong conviction of the importance of what I have undertaken to do; for he who shall at this time successfully discuss the subject I have just indicated, will throw a great deal of light on the present and prospective condition of Britain, and on her relations to the cause of freedom all over the world. He will also present to the American people a higher and a juster view of the value and importance of our own free institutions, and strengthen the purpose to perpetuate them at whatever cost of precious treasure, and more precious blood.

I deeply feel my own inadequacy to so great an undertaking, and throw myself upon the indulgence of my hearers; especially begging them to bear in mind the impossibility of dealing thoroughly and satisfactorily with so great a subject, in the space of a single lecture.

I claim to be quite free from one disqualification for correct observation in Britain. I am not and never can be a hater of England and the English. If you know an American who has visited England, in the spirit in which Russell, formerly of the London Times, visited the United States, with a disposition to see nothing worthy of admiration, and to disparage whatever he saw, give no heed to his testimony; he is an untrustworthy witness; do not read his book if he has published one, though you have already purchased it; it will only mislead you. No man can testify truly of a foreign country, unless he has seen it in a spirit of kindness and candor, disposed to enjoy the beautiful and admire the admirable, without one feeling of envy or jealousy.

Such certainly was my feeling towards England. I set my foot on her soil for the first time with exultation. It was the realization of many a fond day-dream, which I had supposed would be only a day-dream, and I felt great delight in a realization so unexpected. I revered England as the mother of free nations, and the mother of my own country. I regarded her with a sentiment truly filial, and many of the results of my own observations, which I am about to report, were contradictory to the prejudices of my whole previous life, and were accepted with such sorrow as one feels, when forced by stern necessity to acknowledge a wrong in one he loves. I experienced while in England and Scotland from many individuals and families much personal kindness, and generous hospitality, and formed many acquaintances, and some friendships, which I hope will last as long as life; and it will always be painful to me to rebuke that Britain which they love as their country. But the task I have imposed on myself compels me for the moment to lay aside both love and hatred, and endeavor to speak the truth with freedom and fairness.

From the moment of my landing on British soil, my mind was very earnestly directed to the present state of

British opinion and feeling relative to the conflict now in progress in our country. I think any American visiting England at that time would have reasoned thus: that there is in that country a large and zealous body of religious people and earnest philanthropists, who have for half a century manifested great hostility to the system of African slavery, not only within the dominion of Queen Victoria, but in our own country also. And surely these people wherever found will occupy no uncertain position in relation to the great American conflict. They will regard an attempt to destroy the American Union because it is too favorable to the freedom of the Negro, and to found a new "confederacy" on slavery as its corner stone, with unqualified abhorrence, and accord to our government and people their hearty sympathy and good will in our fearful struggle with a foe, that has taken up arms avowedly to perpetuate and extend Negro servitude. He would have reasoned farther, that as in the year 1834 this anti-slavery party was strong enough to control the action of the British Parliament, and secure the passage of an Act emancipating the last slave in the British Empire, at an expense to the nation of one hundred millions of dollars, it would be reasonable to expect to find a very large portion of the enlightened and religious classes of the English people, in open and earnest sympathy with the North.

Such had been my reasonings, and such were my expectations. And I further assumed, that if any of this class of men should be found to have been misled by such lying journals as the London Times, they would only need to know the facts as they are, to insure right thinking and right feeling on the whole subject. With such expectations I began my intercourse with the people of England. My hearers, may therefore judge of my surprise at being told by a highly intelligent merchant of Liverpool, and a truly excellent man, on the evening of my second day on British soil, that English people did at the beginning

of the American war generally sympathize with the North, but that most of them had at that time changed their minds, and were in sympathy with the South. Every step however, that I took in that country convinced me more and more, that in respect to the present sympathy of the people with the South, he was certainly not far from the truth; though his statement that at first they were generally for the North, is contradicted by a very large body of testimony equally respectable, and I am unable to accept it as accurate.

I find it difficult so to classify the forms of opinion which I met, as to do no injustice to any. There is one class, though I must in justice say it is, so far as my observations extended, a small one, whose views and feelings do correspond to the expectations which I had formed: they do thoroughly understand what has been taking place in our country during the last eight or ten years: they fully appreciate the political agitations which preceded the elections of 1860: they know accurately the cause of the war, and the spirit and design of the insurgents: they are in earnest sympathy with the North, and watch the progress of events with little less intensity of interest, than any loyal citizen of the United States. Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel is such a man, and his name ought to be familiar and dear to every American; he is of a noble family, the brother of a Lord; had in early life taken orders in the church of England, and with his high connections, his accomplished manners and elegant scholarship, being also a favorite with the Queen, he had every prospect of the highest promotion in the established church. But his opinions were stubbornly against the establishment, and to those opinions he determined to be faithful in practice, at whatever cost. He therefore left the established church and all his splendid prospects in it, and became and now is the pastor of an unpretending Baptist church in London. I had the pleasure of a favorable introduction to him, and enjoyed several

very agreeable interviews. No American understands our case better than he, or has a heart that beats with warmer affection for American freedom. I have never had the pleasure of meeting a nobler specimen of the christian gentleman, and shall always love England while she produces even a few such men as he.

I met other persons who took similar views of the American war, men who have judged of it in perfect consistency with their life-long hostility to Negro slavery. It is my opinion that such men are more numerous in proportion in Scotland than in England.

There is a second class of persons, more numerous than the one just described, who are sincere and earnest in their love of liberty, but who have been misled by the false representations of American affairs, which have of late filled and disgraced a large portion of the popular literature of England. These men are candid, will hear the truth, and can be easily set right, and will heartily thank the man that sets them right. But within the circle of my observations they are by no means a numerous and influential class, but among them an intelligent American can do a great deal of good. To this class for the most part I presume belong the audiences who so nobly responded to the eloquent words of Henry Ward Beecher in the five principal cities of Britain.

I met a third class, also small, composed of persons who profess great abhorrence of the system of Negro slavery, and repudiate the charge of having any sympathy with the slaveholders' rebellion, or the slaveholders' "confederacy." But they are peace men; they have adopted the extreme peace principles of Elihu Burritt and his co-laborers, and esteem all war whether offensive or defensive a crime. They hold that if the South wished to secede on any account whatever, the Federal government was bound to let her go in peace. They quote the example of our own separation from England as in point, and hold that when any

people wish to rupture the ties of nationality in which they are bound, and to establish a new independent state, they have a right to do so, and that to hinder their doing so by force is oppression.

They are in the profoundest ignorance of the practical difficulties which exist to forbid such a peaceful dissolution of the American Union, and in their simplicity imagine, that at the outset of the great rebellion, it would have been as easy to make two nations out of the United States of America, without shedding one drop of human blood, as to cut our map into two pieces with a pair of scissors. Our own countryman, Elihu Burritt, was in London while I was there, and I presume still is, but is restrained from any utterance in behalf of his suffering and much abused country, by having in former years committed himself to these extreme peace principles. He has perhaps more influence over English minds and in English homes than any other living American, and it is sad to find that by his own folly he is at this time lost to his country and to liberty.

So far as the men of this class are sincere, they are of course amiable enthusiasts, and I found it rather refreshing to witness their eagerness to instruct me and my countrymen, on a subject upon which they are themselves so profoundly ignorant. There are many, however, who advocate this view, to whom I was unable to give any credit for sincerity. Under the garb of love of peace and abhorrence of war they are evidently seeking to hide the bitterest hatred of our free country, and an intense sympathy with the slave-holder's rebellion.

So far as my observations extended all these three classes taken together form but a minority of the English people. Of the rest, composing I fear a vast majority of the nation, I am confident two things may be asserted without doing any injustice.

1. That they have no sympathy at all with the Federal Government in its efforts to suppress the great rebellion.

but that on the contrary they strongly desire the dissolution of the American Union, and the success of the "Southern Confederacy" as a means to that end.

2. That they wish to have this result secured without involving England in the dangers and certain calamities of a war with the United States.

I do not think many Englishmen sympathize with the slaveholder's "confederacy" *for its own sake*; they feel it to be an ugly and hideous thing, and would not wish to seem its advocates or friends; but they value it as a wood-splitter does his wedge, as a means of producing division. They contemplate the dissolution of the American Union with great satisfaction, and they ardently desire and would favor in every way in their power the success of the rebel cause, as a means of so effectually dividing this nation, that the dis severed parts can never again be reunited; and in the eagerness of their desire for its success, they forget its moral deformity and hideousness. Many flatter themselves that in desiring to see our country divided they are influenced by no feelings of hostility. They persuade themselves that it would be better for us; that our country has become too large and unwieldy; that the Northerners and Southerners are so opposed to each other in tastes and character, that it is impossible they should ever live together in peace under the same government. This always seemed to me to come with a very bad grace from a people who, notwithstanding the irreconcilable opposition of the Irish to the English character and government manifested for ages, are always ready to shed rivers of blood if necessary to hold Ireland to the Union however unwilling. But our English cousins do not always feel it necessary to be consistent in such matters, and are to be understood to mean that it is inexpedient and wrong to bind together under the same government people of opposite styles of character and civilization, unless it is necessary to the integrity of the British empire. In that case it would seem to them quite justifiable and necessary.

I fear I shall hardly be belived by my American hearers when I state this matter as strongly as the truth requires. There are very few people in England, or certainly there were when I was there, who believe it possible to restore and perpetuate the Union. This is true of most of those who are quite friendly to the Northern cause. They do not think the restoration of the Union either desirable or possible. Newman Hall, whose name is familiar to us all as an outspoken advocate of the Northern cause, said to me, "I am for the North; but the restoration of the Union is impossible, and you are only fighting for a boundary." I found even loyal Americans residing in England greatly affected by the same view, and full of misgivings of the ultimate result. English people consider us as a nation under the influence of a hallucination, a madness on this point, and to declare your faith in the success of the Federal government would in very many, nay in most circles, not a little damage your reputation for good sense and sound judgment.

This unfavorable pre-judgment of the case extends from the cabinet minister down through all grades of society, and results from ignorance of the real state of the case, and a desire pervading the great body of the people, that the rupture may prove perpetual. A public opinion is thus formed which misleads our friends and even resident Americans.

Many profess to believe that the best hope of abolishing slavery lies in establishing the independence of the South. They affect to think that if once the "Southern confederacy" gains a place among the nations of the earth, it must necessarily yield to the influence of the civilization of the age, and the indignant protest of christendom, and abolish slavery; just as if the very existence of the "confederacy" were not a protest against the civilization of the nineteenth century, and an open defiance of christendom. But if the Federal government succeeds in re-establishing its author-

ity over our whole territory, they maintain that slavery will be restored in all its rigor, and there will be no hope of abolishing the iniquity for ages to come. Thus they hold that it is the Federal government and the people of the North that are the incorrigible enemies of freedom, over whose minds neither the opinions of the civilized world, nor the principles of justice can be expected to exert any influence. I do not say that a majority of the English people hold such opinions, I do not think they do; but that vast multitudes do is certain.

Yet earnestly as the dissolution of the American Union, and the success of the rebellion as a means to that end are desired, there is no party in England, that is respectable in numbers, that desires the British government to recognize the independence of the South at present, or in any way so to violate a formal neutrality, as to give cause of war with the United States. Roebuck and Lindsay who agitate for immediate recognition are unpopular, and generally despised.

The real position of the British ministry is, that they desire the success of the rebel cause, and anticipate it as the only possible result of the conflict. But any present violation of neutrality in its favor would embroil the nation with the United States, and prolong rather than shorten the contest. They differ from Roebuck and the advocates of immediate recognition, not in the end to be aimed at, but in the choice of means for securing it. Most of her Majesty's ministers, with Lord Palmerston at their head, wish to give countenance and encouragement to the rebellion, both personally and officially, just so far as they can without violating that formal neutrality behind which they have chosen to take shelter.

And this creed of the government is also the creed of a vast plurality of all the men and women I met in Britain. I believe it to be the creed of an overwhelming majority of the nation. I do verily believe that while I was sojourn-

ing in that country, the great majority of the people in liberty-loving, slavery-hating England, (though of relative numbers I am liable to misjudge), were so in sympathy with that "confederacy," whose corner-stone is slavery, as ardently to desire and confidently to expect its success, in driving back the Federal armies, and securing for itself a place and a name in the family of nations. To this conclusion I seemed to be conducted by facts constantly around me, from the day I landed in that country, till the day of my departure.

To some the reception our distinguished countryman Henry Ward Beecher met in England may seem inconsistent with this view of the case. But those who think so are certainly not well informed of the different classes, of which the population of Great Britain is composed. In all the large towns, there is a class which, relative to the whole population, is small and without influence, composed of persons whose sincere love of liberty and hatred of all oppression would naturally lead them to favor the cause of the North, and whose sympathies have been withdrawn from us, only by the belief that the people of the North as well as those of the South are utterly hostile to the rights of the negro. This belief has been for many years zealously propagated there, not only by men who have been laboring to prepare the English mind to sympathize with secession when it should be ripe for open development, but by Dr. Geo. B. Cheever and a few other men of like minds—men who have taught the friends of the slave in Britain, that there was no true hostility to slavery in the political agitations of the period that preceded the election of Mr. Lincoln, and in short that the negro has no friends in this country but themselves and their handful of followers.

These representations have been accepted by the class of people to whom I refer, as unquestionable truth, and therefore while they will not give their sympathy to the South,

they withhold it from the North also. I will give you an example. Having taken a walk in the long tranquil twilight of a Scotch summer evening, along the base of Salisbury Crag, on my return I found myself bewildered and unable to find my way to my Hotel. Observing a man of very respectable appearance near me, I inquired the way. He said "I am going that way and will accompany you. You are a stranger." "An American," said I. A conversation sprang up as we walked together, on the all absorbing topic. He soon said "they are a set of scoundrels on both sides." I stopped, and turning so as to look him full in the face, said, "for you to speak thus of my country is a sin against God." He moderated his tone, we resumed our walk and I explained and told the truth as fast as I could. He soon began to receive it with candor, and expressed a strong desire that I should address an audience in Edinburgh. He said there were hundreds of men in that city who were zealous in their hostility to slavery, but they almost all viewed the subject just as he did, thinking that the North is utterly untrue to the liberty of the negro, and therefore unworthy of sympathy. In connection with several other friends he made earnest efforts to procure for me an opportunity to address a meeting in that city. But the bitter opposition of the many, and the timidity of the few prevented the realization of their wishes.

The brilliant and well-deserved reputation of Mr. Beecher, and his well-known fidelity to the rights of the negro, overcame these obstacles, and procured him a favorable reception from persons of this class in Edinburgh. The same happened also in Glasgow, Liverpool and London. But I am greatly mistaken or his audiences were chiefly composed of the limited class of persons to whom I refer, and neither their numbers nor their enthusiasm implies any general movement of the national mind, any more than the burning of a few brush-heaps on the ice of the Arctic seas would imply the opening of navigation to the circumpolar ocean.

I do not mean that Mr. Beecher did not do a great deal of good. I think far otherwise. He set thousands right who had been set wrong by false representations. And though his audiences were largely composed of classes whom the London Times calls "Nobodies," yet these *nobodies* that are notwithstanding men and have the rights of men, must one day be heard in England, and Mr. Beecher helped them powerfully. But I am confident he left the great body of the English people much as he found them, and his experience is not at all inconsistent with what I have said.

But strongly as this view of the case seemed to be supported by facts, I was most reluctant to receive it. I regarded it as shocking and incredible, till on further inquiry I thought I saw the causes which produce and necessitate just such a state of opinion and feeling as I daily encountered.

It must be my next business to exhibit those causes, and the mode of their operation. It is to this part of my subject that I attach principal importance. I am thoroughly convinced that the British government and people are acting in this matter under no accidental and temporary influence; that they are controlled by causes which are deep and permanent; that the position which they occupy in relation to the American conflict is a symptom of organic disease in the English body politic, which should be understood, and distinctly contemplated by the friends of liberty, whether in England herself or in other parts of the world, and especially by the friends of liberty in this country. I have read with great interest and profit the profoundly learned and philosophical oration of Hon. Charles Sumner on our Foreign Relations. In main I believe its argument to be sound and its conclusions just. But I wish, so far as England is concerned, to push the inquiry further than he has done, and to discover those causes, which have produced a development of English opinion and feeling, which at

first view seems so strange and unnatural. Properly viewed, I am convinced that it is perfectly natural, and a thing to have been expected.

In order to make the thing quite plain, I have to illustrate the following proposition:—*The government of England is the government of the many by the privileged few.* I am not about to deny that England is a free country, or that to a large extent our own liberty is of English birth and English growth, or that England has in her past history done much for the liberty of the human race. No man is more ready to acknowledge her claim in these respects than I am. I have always been proud of England as the cradle of freedom.

Still it is true that when we assert that England is a free country, we utter a proposition which to the American public needs much qualification and explanation. There is very much which to our minds is implied in the words "free country," which does not by any means exist in England. For example nothing is more directly in opposition to our ideas of freedom, than class legislation, laws designed and intended to confer certain privileges on a few and on the descendants of those few forever, to the exclusion of the many. The same may be said of conferring privileges and emoluments on one religious denomination to the exclusion of all others. Yet nothing is so fundamental to British law and the British constitution as such class legislation. England is governed by such privileged classes, thus exalted by the laws above the rest of their fellow-men; and these privileges guaranteed to them and their children forever. In this respect the fundamental principles of society in that country are as diametrically opposite to ours as it is possible they should be.

In this opposition is found the true cause of the present state of British opinion in respect to this country. It is not always easy for an American to understand this. We can believe in the freedom, tranquility and happiness of

the English people, under a political constitution differing very widely from ours, without the least apprehension that her example will exert a revolutionary influence here. We cannot be made to believe, that in any supposable case, our people are in danger of abandoning our democratic equality, for such a monarchy or such an aristocracy as that of England.

But an enlightened and thoughtful Englishman cannot so contemplate the success of American democracy. Ask a well-informed Englishman belonging to the most liberal school of English politics, what is the reason why there is in Great Britain so little sympathy with the Federal government in its present struggle. If your experience should agree with mine, you will get for an answer something like the following: "England is governed by a privileged aristocracy and a State church; and the classes interested in perpetuating these exclusive privileges reason, that if your country goes on prospering as in times past, without a privileged aristocracy, and without a State church, there is ground for apprehension, that influenced by your example, the English people will after a while conclude that they too can dispense with these expensive luxuries. And these privileged classes, placed at the head of the nation, are able to send their influence far down into the lower strata of society. And hence wherever the influence of the aristocracy and the State church can penetrate, there is a natural desire, that the experiment of free government going on in the United States may prove a failure."

At first I received such opinions, from however eminent a source, with great caution and distrust; but further observation convinced me that they contain the true and only explanation of what I saw and heard. "The bubble has burst," exclaimed an English Aristocrat, commenting on secession in the house of Lords; and in those words he uttered the very heart of the governing aristocracy of England. They wish the world to regard the liberty, pros-

perity and happiness of the United States, founded on democratic equality of rights, as a mere soap-bubble, brilliant indeed for a little time, but having at last shown itself devoid of every thing substantial, and no longer threatening by its example to undermine the foundations on which rests all aristocratic privilege in England. And millions who themselves enjoy none of the privileges of the aristocracy, echo back the sentiment. "The bubble has burst," expresses the prevalent theory of Englishmen on American affairs while I was among them. Men seemed to say to me by their looks and tones, "It is all over with your boasted republic, and you are strangely deluded or you would know it."

The bearing of all this will be still more obvious, if I can make it apparent what aristocracy is, as an element of English society. First and foremost stands the fact that one of the two co-ordinate branches of the great imperial legislature of England is composed of persons, who hold their seats by hereditary right. The meaning of which is, that there are in England some hundreds of families, the head of each of which is, by right of his birth, a member of that branch of the English legislature which corresponds to our United States Senate. You will appreciate the importance of this if you suppose, that in this country we were first to adopt the principle, that once a member of the United States Senate, a man remained a member till his death; again that at the death of a Senator his oldest son should by right of his birth succeed to his seat, and so on to his children and his children's children forever. We can form a conception how great a departure it would be from democratic equality of legislation, to confer such privileges on our Senators and their descendants forever. This is English aristocracy.

But this is not all of English aristocracy. From the time of the Norman conquest to the present, a period of eight hundred years, a few new noble families have held a

large portion of all the lands of the kingdom. This is true now to a greater extent than at any former period of English history. The same noble families whose heads compose the house of Lords, hold a large portion of the lands of the United Kingdom. And the land held by them is not, like all land with us, liable to be bought and sold like any other property, but descends to the oldest son of the present holder, thus perpetuating this land-monopoly forever. The oldest son of a Lord succeeds not only to his father's seat in the senate, but to all his father's lands, and according to the theory and tendency of the system will transmit both to his children and his children's children forever; thus securing to these few families one-half of the legislative power of the kingdom, and a monopoly of its lands forever. This gives you some idea of the value and importance of those class privileges, which the Aristocracy of England are interested in preserving and perpetuating.

But this is not all. The laws which regulate the descent of all the landed property of the kingdom are constructed on the same principle. Whenever any land owner, noble or not, dies without a will, his real estate goes to his oldest son. And the custom of calling one's lands by his own name, and transmitting them to his oldest son as the representative of his family has come down from immemorial antiquity, and as the possession of such an entailed estate, confers high dignity and social position on a family, every wealthy man is under strong inducements to become an extensive land-owner if possible, and transmit it by entail to his oldest son as the representative of his family. Under the influence of these causes, that portion of the lands of the kingdom which is not held by the nobility properly so called, that is, the Lords, is mostly monopolized by a small number of gentry, and is transmitted from father to oldest son, by the same tenure as the lands of the nobility. This process has gone on with great rapidity within the last few years. It is almost within the memory of man

that the number of holdings of land has been reduced from more than 250,000 to 32,000, and this process of monopolizing the land in a few hands is now going on with unabated rapidity.

The consequences are deplorable. Few English laborers whether agricultural or mechanical own the land on which they lie down at night, or the roof that covers them, or have any hope of ever owning them. There is no land which can be bought in small parcels to suit purchasers of small means. It is chiefly aggregated into these great entailed estates, and not for sale on any terms.

Some of the consequences of this order of things will strike an observant man, who merely rides across England, say from Liverpool to London by Railway. He will often see stretching away around him in every direction, the richest, most beautiful and highly cultivated farms on earth, but perhaps not a human habitation in view. The men and women that till these fields dwell in small, inconvenient, comfortless cottages, which belong to the proprietor of the land, and make no figure in the landscape, in which large families are crowded together in one, two, or at the most three rooms, with no hope of benefitting their condition while they live. If there were free trade in land, as with us, a young man of industry and enterprise might lay aside his wages, live unmarried, and practice self-denial, till he could purchase a little homestead, and have the hope of a comfortable home. But that is impossible, the land is monopolized by the nobility and gentry, and the young man has no hope but of just such a comfortless peasant's life as his father led before him. "Once a peasant, always a peasant" is a proverb.

It is not to my purpose on the present occasion, to dwell on the influence of this land-monopoly on the condition of the laboring classes. I will refer all who wish to inform themselves on the subject, to the work of Joseph Kay, Esq., M. A., "on the social condition of the English people." The

writer is an Englishman, a graduate of Cambridge and a churchman, and not to be suspected of misrepresenting to the disparagement of his own country. He exhibits the miserable condition of the laboring classes, not as an argument against the land monopoly on which the whole structure of English society rests, but to secure a more vigorous prosecution of the system of national schools. His book is a series of ill concealed fallacies from the beginning to the end. Multiply schools for the education of the poor as you will, they will still remain poor and hopelessly degraded, as long as a few thousand families monopolize all the real property of the kingdom. But the facts of this book remain undisputed and indisputable, and an American can see that they have their only explanation in this land monopoly and their only remedy in its destruction. Such a monopoly of the land of Great Britain is, by the existing laws of the realm, secured to the nobility and gentry, to the utter exclusion of the laboring masses, and it is such a monopoly, that the classes which now govern that country are interested in perpetuating.

But we have not yet the whole strength of the case. All this is a provision for perpetuating out the influence and position of the families of the nobility and gentry; but it is made not only at the expense of the great body of the English people, but of all the children of these very families, except the oldest sons, and such daughters as may have the good fortune to be married to oldest sons. Some provision must be made for these younger sons, or they will soon form a class, having all the pride and expensive habits of the nobility, with none of its affluence. Three great permanent institutions of Britain stand ready to supply this want,—the army, the navy, and the church. By having a preponderating influence in the government in their own hands, they are always able for the most part to secure the offices of high honor and emolument in the army and navy for the younger sons of the governing classes; thus providing

for them honorable and lucrative positions, and contenting their aspirations, without dividing to them any portion of their patrimonial estates. I do not affirm that such an allotment of these offices takes place to the entire exclusion of persons born in humble circumstances. I only affirm the general course and tendency of things. I am aware that the army and navy would exist if these class privileges were abolished. But they would cease to be used for the benefit of certain privileged families, and by being thrown within the reach of all classes, would stimulate effort and encourage hope in those who now regard them as entirely beyond their reach. They would be administered democratically and not aristocratically.

With the church however the case is still stronger, and the abuse still more flagrant and atrocious. I wish to be understood. I am making no attack on the Episcopal church as such. I speak only of the English church as established by law, and supported by the state. And of that I affirm, that it is a principal, I believe an essential prop of British class privilege. Its high honors and princely incomes are in the gift of the crown and the aristocracy, and most generously eke out any short comings of the army and navy, in providing for the younger sons and poor relations of the privileged classes. I say nothing now of the enormity of using the sacred offices and functions of the Christian ministry for so sordid, and earthly a purpose, or of the fact that devout sentiments and a religious life are hardly considered essential qualifications for high position in the establishment. I speak only of the church as a political institution, as furnishing an opportunity to those who would otherwise be the poor relations of the aristocracy, made poor by this very law of primogeniture, to climb to the highest positions, and even to occupy the bench of Bishops in the house of Lords, the peers of Earls, Viscounts and Marquises. In that same magnificent house of Lords, as I saw it in all the brilliancy of an evening session, (and

its sessions are held only in the evening,) there is nothing grander or more imposing than that bench of Bishops, occupying a position immediately on the right of the wool-sack, with their long robes of white lawn brightly contrasting with the red cushions of their seats; while the Prince of Wales was in his seat among the great Lords of the realm in front of the Lord Chancellor, and the beautiful young Princess Alexandra was looking down upon the scene from the gallery above, amusing herself, as I thought, with a young attendant, to see her young husband putting on the newly assumed dignities of a peer of the realm. It was quite refreshing amid all the solemn stateliness of that scene, to see that a royal Princess could amuse herself, as any light hearted American girl might have done, in like circumstances.

I never was more intensely an American Republican than while I surveyed that scene; and my Republicanism was a good deal sharpened by the fact, that a sergeant-at-arms of very lordly and dictatorial bearing was constantly watching over some ten or twelve common men like myself, who had obtained grace to occupy seats in the stranger's gallery, and if any one of us rose from his seat for a moment, for the purpose of seeing something which interested him, he was told to take his seat, in a tone befitting the plantation; and that though no one was behind to be put to any inconvenience by his standing. It was only that common men might be made to behave with becoming decorum, and awful reverence, in presence of the Lords spiritual and Lords temporal of England. As I surveyed that scene I thought I understood why that house of the British Parliament is conservative, and wishes to perpetuate class privilege by legislation. I could understand what the word conservative means in that house. I could see clearly why the Aristocracy supports the church, and the church seeks to lay its highest religious sanctions at the feet of the Aristocracy. "Tickle me and I will tickle you."

I know indeed that there are many clergymen of the church of England, who are not the younger sons, and poor relations of the privileged classes. But it is also true that there are real labors to be performed, which it is not to be expected that a scion of aristocracy would be willing to perform. It is therefore necessary to have a little army of men in the church who will perform a great deal of drudgery for very small pay, and common men's sons will answer for that. It is also true that sometimes a man succeeds in climbing to the highest honors and emoluments of the church, from a very humble birth. That is true of the present newly appointed Archbishop of York, whom I had the pleasure of hearing in an able and excellent address before the British and Foreign Bible Society, in Exeter Hall. I thought him an able and good man, and he spoke more like a well-educated and cultivated American, than any other speaker I heard in Britain. But such cases are spoken of as remarkable; they are the exceptions and not the rule. And some such exceptions are necessary to the successful working of the system. If no hope were held out to commoners of promotion in the church, they would not be willing to perform service as poor curates. No matter how good your trap may be, you must bait it with corn; but in skillful hands, a little corn will suffice to catch a great deal of game.

This picture is not complete without showing how also the same privileged classes that have a perpetual monopoly of the lands of the kingdom and subsidize the army, the navy and the church to the support of their family interests, are able to exert an almost preponderating influence in the election of the other house of Parliament, and by means of government patronage to make themselves felt through all the gradations of the administration. But time would fail me for this detail on the present occasion.

This then I affirm is an outline view of aristocracy—of class privilege in England. It is but an outline, and the

more one sees of that country, the more this outline is filled up with perfectly homogeneous details; the more one sees and feels the meaning of such words as class, rank, aristocracy. I thank God that in our country no man can learn what these words mean.

Let any one now reflect that the government of the United States is an attempt to found a great English speaking nation, upon principles exactly contradictory to all this, without a throne, without an aristocracy, without any class privilege, without any established church. Let it be remembered, too, that our language is common, and that thought circulates in both countries freely as the air. Is it then wonderful, if the privileged classes in England regard our success, our rapid growth, our prosperity and happiness under our democratic equality, as dangerous to the perpetuity of their exclusive privileges? And that they ardently and passionately desire our failure, our overthrow? That to see us convulsed with the throes of a great revolution is to them an occasion of exultation and joy? And that they are unable to conceal their desire that the convulsion may result in the utter overthrow of the Great Republic? And that this desire finds utterance from the cabinet minister downward? Considering that the British government is composed of such materials, was it to be expected that it would sympathize with ours in its efforts to suppress a great rebellion, and restore the American Union upon the basis of democratic freedom and equality? No! it would be unnatural and incredible. Precisely what is happening is what ought to have been foreseen and expected from the relation of the two nations to each other

But I am told that while this explains the unfriendly position of the privileged classes, and the church towards our country at this time, it shows no reason why the unprivileged classes, and the dissenters should not sympathize with us all the more. But this will be plain enough, when we consider the way in which these classes, though seem-

ing to have interests so opposite to those of the privileged classes, are yet made to sympathize in feeling and co-operate in action with the aristocracy. We are apt to think of an English commoner, as one who feels towards the aristocracy that is placed above him, as we should feel towards a similar number of families, who might be arbitrarily selected among ourselves, and permanently invested with such exclusive privileges as the nobility in that country enjoy. It may well be imagined that we should feel nothing but animosity, and we are apt to suppose, that English unprivileged men must feel the same. So we are apt to think of an English dissenter, as one who feels towards the privileged national church, as all other denominations in this country would feel towards one which might be singled out from all the rest, and richly endowed and supported at the expense of the State, and at our own expense. But this mode of viewing the subject is very erroneous and fallacious. According to our conception of things, there are few middle class men, and few dissenters in England.

Let us try to make this plain. Let us suppose the case of a prosperous tradesman, merchant or manufacturer, in the middle class, and belonging to a dissenting church; he certainly does not much relish the superiority over him claimed and enjoyed by the higher classes. He would like to see the way open to him to enjoy their privileges, or to be placed on an equal footing with those above him. And then as a dissenter he does not like the established church; especially he does not like to be obliged to support a church the principles of which he neither believes nor approves. But he is loyal to the throne; he yields to no man in zeal to support the monarchy, and in attachment to the royal family. This is the boast of middle class men and dissenters generally. Almost no Englishman and certainly no Englishwomen that I met, has any leanings towards republicanism. Within the circle of my observation, republicans are as scarce in England as monarchists in the United

States. And the sentiment of loyalty has perhaps some peculiar intensity under a female sovereign. The feeling of loyalty mingles with the feeling of gallantry, and each exalts the other. I am not about to intimate that our sovereign Queen Victoria does not really possess all the admirable virtues which her subjects ascribe to her; for really I have no right to speak on the subject. I did not even see the skirt of her royal garments, and to intimate such a thing even here, would be a sort of social treason. But I do say it seems to me her admiring subjects have very little knowledge whether she possesses them or not; that she is contemplated only at a great distance by most of them as a sort of mythical personage, an unknown object of homage, whom their imaginations invest with all possible beauties, graces and virtues, and that for this sort of worship a woman is really a fitter object than a man. I may therefore I think presume that I have seen English loyalty at flood-tide, especially as my visit was just subsequent to the marriage of the Prince of Wales to the beautiful Princess Alexandra, thus bringing within the sphere of British homage another object of worship, combining royalty with youth and female beauty. The national enthusiasm quite exceeded an American's comprehension.

I have supposed the case of a middle class English dissenter, in the midst of all this. It is a delicate point of honor with him not to be outdone by the proudest aristocrat in the whole kingdom, in attachment to the throne. But he is a thoughtful man, and he inquires, can that throne be sustained, without the support of the aristocracy? And he readily answers no: so any other sensible man would answer. If, says he, we must have a throne, we must have an aristocracy, and I know not that we could have a better one than we have. The aristocracy of England is the most respectable which the world has ever seen. And he asks further can the aristocracy be sustained without the support of the church? And I think a sensible man would again

answer, no. Deprive the younger sons of the nobility of those opportunities of place and power which the church furnishes, and many of them would be impelled to attack that law of primogeniture, which is the very foundation of all aristocratic privileges, the very corner-stone of the British constitution. You cannot make the younger sons of British nobility support that system, unless you give them some equivalent for that interest in the family estate which aristocratic law secures exclusively to the head of the family. Give them the church, and the chance of wearing the lawn, and occupying a seat in the house of Lords, and they will be content; take it from them and they will lead the attack upon the whole system.

Our middle class man is thus made to feel the necessity of sustaining the aristocracy and the established church. And accordingly there are at this day very few middle class men who would overturn the aristocracy or the church if they could. Thus practically middle class men are aristocrats, and dissenters are churchmen. This is not mere theory; I have seen it illustrated in very many living examples. If a zealous dissenter makes an attack on the establishment, he will begin by assuring his hearers, that he has no manner of hostility to the church. If you utter a word that implies that you have something of a republican's aversion to the aristocracy, you will be rebuked and the thread of conversation, whatever it may happen to be, will be broken off, till the aristocracy can be vindicated with all the zeal of an Englishman's partiality for whatever is English. You will be assured, as I have been on the authority of highly intelligent and respectable independent ministers, that the English aristocracy are the most self-denying set of people in the world. In any such case, if you were interested in continuing the thread of conversation, you will many times regret your allusion to the aristocracy before you will get back to it again, and you will take a lesson to avoid anything of the sort in the future.

There is another cause of great efficacy, which binds the lower to the higher classes, and makes them zealous in supporting the whole superstructure of English society as it is. All classes in England above the toiling operative, or the peasant agricultural laborer, have hope of rising to wealth. This is true of the mercantile, manufacturing and trading classes. And wealth always opens more or less chances of sharing the privileges of the aristocracy. By means of wealth a man of talents may find his way to high political station, and even to a peerage. The son of a wealthy merchant may perhaps aspire to the hand of the daughter of a noble of decayed fortune; or the heiress of a wealthy commoner may be a match for a needy marquis or earl; and thus in many ways a commoner who is rich or hopes to become rich, may cherish the anticipation, that his blood may yet circulate in noble veins. These chances are sufficient to encourage the hope in a commoner of sharing, through himself or his children, the privileges to which his birth does not entitle him, and make him wish to preserve unimpaired, what he secretly hopes one day to enjoy. The poor white man in our slave states hopes at sometime to become a wealthy slaveowner, and to enjoy the privileges of the class, and therefore always gives his vote to perpetuate those privileges. This is not the only analogy which I could point out, between society in England and in our Southern States.

It is not difficult then, to understand that as long as an Englishman of the middle class is loyal to the throne and the royal family, he will be in sympathy with the aristocracy. He will dread the influence of the great Republic as tending to revolutionize England, and overturn all those institutions of privilege and caste, to which he is made to think he is indebted for the liberty and tranquility which he enjoys; and the tranquility of English society must be seen to be understood. He is prepared to join with the aristocrat in the exultant exclamation, "The bubble has burst."

I have no difficulty in finding precisely here the cause of the want of English sympathy with us in our present conflict. If the aristocracy and church of England sympathized with us they would have forgotten the instincts of their class. It would be as unnatural as for an animal to loose the power of distinguishing its own kind. If the middle classes of Englishmen did sympathize with us, it would be the precursor of speedy revolution in England herself. It would show that the middle classes were so entirely out of sympathy with the aristocracy and the church, as no longer to tolerate their exclusive privileges. And if such a day ever comes, the days of the English aristocracy are numbered.

In ordinary intercourse with the English people one constantly meets the evidence of the truth of what I have just been saying. The number of persons that I met in that country, who really like, or who do not dislike the democratic equality of our country is certainly quite small. As a general rule you cannot converse long with an intelligent Englishman, even though he belong to the middle classes, in relation to what is now happening in the United States, before he will give you to understand that he regards our present convulsion as a proof of the utter failure of our democratic institutions. It is hardly probable he will hear you patiently till you can make your own view of the case understood. He will not be long in making it apparent, that he thinks he understands the affairs of our country much better than you do, and that if you will hear him he can point out to you the whole cause of our trouble in a moment. If you give him a chance—and he will take a chance whether you give it to him or not—he will aim his blows at the foundations of our institutions.

The English have a right to be proud of their own institutions, and of their own history, as compared with other European nations. A sense of this superiority has produced marked effects on the national character. Many of

them are not far from the belief, that it is in Britain alone that true ideas of government can be acquired. And the present troubles of our country have greatly confirmed them in this belief. They fully believe that an American, in order to understand English institutions, must learn in a docile spirit from an English teacher—and in this they are certainly not far from right—but that an Englishman has no need at all to be instructed in reference to our affairs, by anything which we can tell him. They regard themselves as endowed by their own superior position, with a political insight quite in advance of the rest of mankind.

There is one proof of the correctness of these views which seems to me at once the most mournful and the most decisive. It is the opinion almost universally entertained in England, in regard to popular education. On this important subject I found an almost absolute unanimity, and that in opposition to a system of popular education, which like ours shall be intended, to bring the treasures of knowledge within the reach of every child, irrespective of the condition of his parents. The national mind is thoroughly imbued with the notion of class education. I often used the results attained to in the public schools of Boston, as an illustration of our system in its aims and spirit. I stated that the Mayor of Boston or the Governor of Massachusetts must either send his son to a school where he would be liable to have for a classmate and a seatmate the son of a day laborer, or else send him to an inferior school; and that that school is absolutely free alike to the son of the laborer, and the son of the Mayor. "That can never be in England," was the invariable reply. And with the present constitution of English society it is true, "that can never be in England;" as well hope to supply the present cotton famine from the ice fields of the Arctic circle. It is a logical inference from the whole English system, that the child of the rich is to be educated for wealth and leisure, and the child of the poor for poverty and toil. And benevolent, humane, religious minds are not

shocked at this inference; they accept it, and reject the thought of providing for universal education on democratic principles. "*Would you send your son to such a school?*" I was asked many times with pungent emphasis. I was proud to answer I do send my son and my daughter too to such school. "How then can I avoid the conclusion, that the English middle classes are as truly committed to the principle of class legislation as the aristocracy itself, and as unprepared to sympathize with the government of democratic equality in the United States? They discard our system in its fundamental principle.

All this has been greatly aggravated by the periodical press, daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly. Many I know maintain that the alienated feeling which exists towards us is the result of merely accidental causes, and has been occasioned chiefly by the efforts of the press, and especially of the London Times. And I am not at all insensible to the malignant power of such anti-American Journals as the London Times and Saturday Review in times like these. They have done all which the press, wielded by the highest order of talent, could do, to cast odium and contempt upon the Federal Government, and to encourage and aid the rebellion. Nothing can make me hate England; but if it had been possible, the daily perusal of her newspapers for three months would have made me hate her most cordially. They flagrantly misrepresent facts; they studiously conceal from their readers things the most important to be known. They display before the English public every loathsome ulcer or unsightly pimple on the American body politic. The well-known vices of slavery and the south are charged over to the account of the people of the free states, while the slaveholders of the south are finely pictured out as high-toned gentleman. No means which genius can invent is spared to make our government and people appear odious, coarse, vulgar and contemptible. You admit said a gentleman, that the Saturday Review is clever. I admit, said I.

that should Milton's Satan turn editor, he would make just such a paper. And when I see the perverse and satanic ingenuity, which these and other English Journals have employed against the cause of democratic liberty, all the vices and all the short comings of our government, our officials and our people, I feel that every American is under some such obligation to be consistently faithful to the cause of liberty, as every Christian minister and member of a Christian church is, to lead a consistently virtuous life. The vices of Americans damage the cause of liberty, just as the vices of Christians damage the cause of religion.

Still I deny that the primary cause of the mischief can be found in the journals. They have only uttered what the nation was prepared and desirous to hear. They have only been the mouth pieces of the English aristocracy and their supporters and sympathisers. If the enlightened governing classes of England had been as earnest in their sympathy with the North, as they have been in desiring the dissolution of the American Union and the destruction of the great Republic, the Times would have been as violently Northern as it is anti-Northern. The Times understands the market for which it manufactures. It adapts its seed to the soil on which it sows it. It would not have been possible, that the Times should have procured a reception or even a tolerance of its views of the American question, except on the condition that the public mind was already prepared for it, by a settled aversion to the American Republic, and a wish to see it enfeebled and overturned. When millions wish to believe a lie, it is safe and profitable for the conductors of a public journal to utter it. This is precisely what has happened as between the Times and the British public.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of the omnipresence of the Times in Britain. I do not remember ever to have entered a hotel or restaurant in which I did not find it, and in very many cases you will find no other paper. It is in every shop and every counting-room. "Every Englishman,"

said an American residing in London, "finds fault with the Times, but no Englishman can eat his breakfast without it." It is not confined to the British Isles. The great Continental hotels of Germany and Switzerland have no reliance for daily news but on the London Times. During these years of our war this lying organ of the slaveholder's rebellion has not only had the job of drawing the portrait of us Americans for English, but for European use, and over a large portion of the continent, its version of our affairs goes uncontradicted for absolute verity. It would not be difficult to give a whole lecture on the London Times and Saturday Review; but I forbear. Perhaps I have said enough of a very disagreeable subject.

In speaking thus of the newspapers of England, it would be unpardonable not to say, that there are several daily and weekly journals in Great Britain, that are true to our country in this hour of her trial and true to freedom. Such are the London Daily News, the Morning Star, the Caledonian Mercury at Edinburgh, and several others which might be named. But they are laboring under very great disadvantages, and have very little control over public opinion. They are true prophets of freedom, but prophesy in sackcloth. Indeed the position of these Journals before the British public is one of the striking proofs of the correctness of my interpretation of British opinion. If you want the Times you can find it almost without taking a step. If you want the Daily News you must take some pains to get it. The journals that are in sympathy with American liberty have not the ear of the people.

Many persons would deny that they are at all influenced by the causes to which I have ascribed the present state of English feeling; though they would admit that they do desire the dissolution of the Union, and the success of the rebellion. On being asked why? they would say, the United States are too large for one nation. On explaining themselves further they would say, you carry yourselves

with too high a hand; when any difficulty arises between the two governments, we have to permit you to have it your own way, to avoid a war. They want us to be smaller and weaker, in order that we may be more manageable. This view of the case was presented to me many times, and I have no doubt influences a great number of minds. These people want us to be in a position in which it will only be necessary for the British lion to show his teeth, to bring us to terms. They wish to be able to settle any difficulty summarily, by sending troops to Canada, as in the affair of the Trent.

But this view really comes to the same thing as the one I am insisting on. It is more superficial, but springs from the same root. If these men were in sympathy with our institutions of democratic equality, they would not wish to see us so weak, as to be under the necessity of doing the bidding of the "Mistress of the seas." They would wish us to be strong enough to stand fearlessly on our rights, in presence of the aristocracy of England. This jealousy of our increasing power springs only from a desire, that that aristocracy may easily maintain its supremacy on every continent and every ocean. In principle therefore this view of the case does not differ from that I have presented throughout this discourse. It is however the shape in which the subject presents itself to many minds: and it is amusing to see with what ingenuity they justify themselves in a view so intrinsically mean and selfish. It is better for you they say to be divided; your country is too large and unwieldy. They forget the boast that on the domains of their Queen the sun never sets. They say the North and the South are not homogeneous,—different races; the Southerners high-souled English cavaliers; the Northerners a mixed race, Irish, Scotch, Germans and English tradesmen, mechanics and small farmers. I am very friendly to your country said an Englishman, whom I met at a hotel in Scotland, but I really think it would be for your good to be divided. I appreciate said I such friendship at its full value

I am perfectly aware that there is one class of Englishmen, who do sincerely sympathize with us in our present conflict, who will earnestly deny the truth and justice of this representation of English opinion and feeling. I am sorry to differ from them; for among them are persons whom I shall always delight to regard as my personal friends. But I am sure they are mistaken. The reason they will assign for their dissent is, that whenever any movement is made in Parliament in favor of recognition, it is always an ignominious failure. That is true; but why is it a failure? Not because Lord Palmerston and his government do not wish and expect the success of the rebellion, in common with the great body of the British Parliament. Notoriously they do; for they openly say so: but because they do not think present recognition a wise measure for promoting that result. They choose to stand on the ground of neutrality. But that neutrality is only formal. Moral neutrality there is none, for they openly declare themselves from their places in Parliament on the side of the slaveholder's rebellion, and wish it success. How then does the fact that Roebuck's motion for recognition proved a failure, or the fact that Roebuck is generally esteemed a fool, which is true, show that British opinion is not what I have represented it? Plainly it does not show any such thing.

Thus far I have said nothing of cotton in assigning the causes of the present state of British opinion. I do not think the cotton famine which has been caused by the great American conflict has exerted much direct influence on the policy of the British government. It has certainly been felt by the manufacturing interest as a great inconvenience, and a great many English people speak most complacently of the forbearance of their government, in abstaining from active intervention to put a speedy end to a war, which is so disastrous to English interests. And if the government had been disposed to interfere in the matter, the necessity of having cotton would have furnished a very convenient

pretext for so doing. But intelligent men have always been able so see, that intervention meant a war with the United States, and that such a war would bring greater disaster upon the manufacturing and commercial interests of Britain, than could ever come of the cotton famine patiently endured. British statesmen have never been blind to the consideration, that intervention in the interest of the cotton spinners would close the markets of the United States against all their products for an indefinite period, and let loose a swarm of American privateers on their commerce in every sea.

But though cotton has exerted very little direct influence on the relations of the two governments, it has acted powerfully on British opinion, or rather on British feeling. Every one who has studied the lessons of history is well aware, that for more than a hundred years, the interests or the supposed interests of British trade have exercised a very powerful influence over the opinions, and passions of the people, and the policy of the government. It was British trade that shaped the whole colonial policy of England, almost from the founding of her American colonies. Her colonies were regarded with interest not in view of the extension of civilization, freedom and christianity over the hitherto unpeopled wilds of North America, but as most profitable outposts and factories of British commerce. And in legislating for them, there was little thought of making them strong, enlightened and free communities, but only of rendering them as profitable as possible to British merchants, and perpetual dependencies of the British crown. In proof of this I need only to refer to the oppressive restrictions which were laid on the commerce and manufactures of the colonies, and the persisting obstinacy with which the government maintained the slave-trade, in opposition to the wishes and oft repeated protests of the colonists. It was the selfish grasping spirit of British trade, that chiefly planted and sustained in the then thirteen colonies of Britain, that

bitter and poisonous root, from the growth of which we are now reaping an unequaled harvest of death. When I remember how unscrupulous and persisting Britain was, in fastening the curse of slavery to American soil, and what millions of wealth were accumulated in British hands through that iniquitous traffic less than a century ago, I think England should bear the cotton famine growing out of the great American struggle, not only with patience, but with repentance and earnest effort to make some reparation for the mighty mischief she inflicted on us through her cupidity, in the days of our colonial dependence on her policy. And I mourn that I see so few signs either of repentance or reparation.

I cannot forget that it was this grasping and selfish policy of British trade, that made the war of the American Revolution a necessity not only of American freedom, but of the freedom of the British empire. One would have hoped that, taught by so sad a lesson, England would have learned to construct her commercial policy on more liberal and righteous principles. But if we examine attentively the relations of England to India and China, in periods long subsequent to American independence, we shall find sorrowful evidence, that the same selfish spirit still influences British trade, and through it exerts a powerful and often disastrous influence on the government. The forcing of English opium, grown by compulsion in India, upon the markets of China, in direct violation of the salutary laws of the empire, and in utter disregard of all the vices and sorrows which it causes to that people, all, that English commerce might prosper and English merchants be made richer, is one of the most disgraceful and sorrowful transactions—or to speak more truly one of the most hideous crimes of the nineteenth century. And any one who has had intercourse with the English people during the progress of the great American conflict, has seen mournful evidence, that the same spirit is still active and influential. The feel-

ing is widely prevalent, that one of the foremost duties of the government is to protect trade at whatever cost, that if Britons want cotton they must have it, at no matter what cost to justice, humanity and freedom; and that the government should tolerate no state of things in any other country, which interferes with the supply of cotton to the English mills. They almost feel that the island of Great Britain was alone made to get rich, and the rest of the world to furnish it materials and a market.

It is almost ludicrous to observe with what animosity and passion many Englishmen speak of the Morrill Tariff. They seem almost to feel that for us to impose a duty on a product of British industry is a direct and glaring infringement on their rights, and would be a just cause of war, if they were not too forbearing and peacefully disposed to make war for such a reason. They seem to have forgotten that it is not yet twenty years since, the great leading staples of all the free American States encountered a duty in British ports, which in all ordinary circumstances amounted to prohibition. In some such cases Englishmen seem to me to have poor memories. I believe that when England adopted the policy of free trade, she took a step in the right direction, that she learned one really useful lesson; but she must allow her American cousins a little time to learn, what she herself could only be taught by the experience of centuries. The sensitiveness of the English about whatever affects the American market for English products is certainly remarkable.

It must be admitted that this selfishness of British trade is one fertile source of Southern sympathy at the present time. They desire the dissolution of the American Union into an indefinite number of parts, that there may be no power on this continent, as there is none on the other, able to cope with the "Mistress of the seas." On that supposition they hope that England will be able to control the commercial policy of the American continent for the long

future. If we are to have a strong, united, ocean-bound Republic, then there is no hope for British policy here. But if we can be divided and kept feeble by internal wars and jealousies, then may England still rule the waves; and though America has become politically independent, yet commercially she will be but a vast dependency of Britain. Hence the passionate desire of thousands, that the American Union may be dissolved, and that anything, even the accursed system of negro slavery, should be used as the wedge of division. "*Furor arma ministrat.*" That under the influence of such passions men forget the relations of this conflict to the cause of universal freedom is not wonderful.

I should do injustice to my subject not to remark that English trade and English aristocracy are most intimately united in their interest and spirit. Though the aristocracy are not directly engaged in trade, they are in many ways most deeply interested in the extension of British commerce and in the increase of the nation's wealth. The increase of the population and especially the growth of the great manufacturing and commercial cities add immensely to their own incomes, and the value of their estates. Had England continued to be an agricultural people, having no manufactures or commerce except for the supply of her home wants, her aristocracy, her church and her universities would have been comparatively poor till this day. And from manufactures and commerce must come that indefinite increase of those revenues, which is hoped for in the future. It is by the golden harvests of commerce also, combined with manufactures, that the tradesman expects to obtain wealth, which shall open a pathway to himself or to his children to the honors and privileges of the peerage. Thus the aristocracy of rank and the aristocracy of wealth both actual and prospective are alike interested in the success of the rebellion, and the dissolution of the Great Republic.

It was a sorrowful experience to an American paying his first and probably his only visit to England, after having loved her from his cradle, to be obliged daily to stand face to face with such facts, and to admit such a view of England to be true. Is this then even so? Is this England, that has fought so many battles for freedom, and carried her hostility to the slave-trade and negro slavery to the ends of the earth, to fail us in this hour, and give her sympathy, her countenance, and her efficient material aid to this iniquitous conspiracy, pledged to tear down our republic because too favorable to freedom, and found a new power hitherto unknown to the nations, on negro slavery as its corner-stone? Is the English government and people restrained, not only from recognizing this conspiracy against the civilization of christendom, but from active intervention in its favor, only by considerations of policy and expediency? Born in treason, robbery and perjury, do Britons desire its success and victory as a means of dismembering our republic? And I was forced daily to see and know that they do. And a solemn sense of the enormous criminality of such a position of the English people in such a crisis, suggested to my mind dark forebodings of the convulsions which may yet await that people, and cast many a shadow over what would otherwise have been one of the most cheerful and joyous portions of my life. I affirm moreover, that this criminality attaches not to aristocrats and churchmen alone, but to commoners and dissenting ministers and people.

I bore credentials as a delegate from the American Congregational Union, to the Congregational Union of England and Wales. I was received by that body, with every courtesy which was due to the body which I represented, and invited to address the Union under favorable circumstance; but was requested to say nothing of the merits of the great conflict now going on in our country. The reason assigned for this limitation was, that they were divided in

sentiment on this subject, and its introduction would lead to an unpleasant debate. It was therefore that I was not permitted to speak one word before that assembly of British christians for the cause of freedom in my country, though they had passed in my presence a resolution declaring their undiminished hostility to negro slavery. I remembered the past. I called to mind the oft repeated and just remonstrances which come to us from our brethren in Great Britain against this iniquitous system,—remonstrances which I doubt not have exerted no small influence in bringing on the very conflict in which we are now engaged with the rebel propagandists of slavery. And yet the Congregational Union of England and Wales is now divided in sentiment, and does not know which side to take, and suppresses all utterance on one of the gravest moral issues of the nineteenth century, that she may shield herself from unpleasant agitation. This seemed to me marvellous and almost incredible, I knew not what to think of British christianity. I wondered whither the spirits of Wilberforce and Clarkson had fled. I felt that the present conduct of these men cast a painful suspicion over the sincerity of their past professions, and was fitted to raise a serious doubt as to the position they may be expected to occupy in the future.

If the views of this discourse are correct one can not contemplate the future of England without grave apprehension. If these things are so, she cannot in the future render any important service to the cause of liberty in the world, till her own constitution shall have undergone very great reforms—reforms indeed much more radical than she is now willing to tolerate even in conception. That aristocratic liberty which exists in England is not now possible in any other country on earth. The reason why it is possible in England is, that through all the struggles of the past, the English aristocracy has maintained itself, and more than maintained itself, as the governing force in society. It has united with the people in limiting and almost annihila-

ting royal prerogative, and those powers which have been taken from the crown it has so divided with the people, as always to reserve the lion's share to itself. To the people it has granted and guaranteed personal liberty, while to itself it has taken enormous privileges, and the power of directing and controlling the most powerful empire on earth for ages. But a liberty so guarded by contract between the different orders of a state, while each retained its own separate existence, was never attained in any other country, and has been enjoyed in England so long, only by what one is tempted to regard as a happy accident, and cannot now be established in any other nation on earth. It cannot be in America, because all attempts to transplant the aristocracies of Europe to this continent have proved miserable failures, and no man in his senses believes it possible, to create a respectable aristocracy out of American materials. It cannot be in continental Europe, because in all those countries aristocracy was first laid utterly prostrate for two centuries, beneath the thrones of absolute monarchs, and then trampled in the very mire of the streets, in the great convulsions of the French Revolution, and those that succeeded it. No well informed man would regard it as any more possible to restore aristocracy in France, Germany and Italy, to that control over society which it has in England, than it is to create an aristocracy in the United States. When the aristocracies of those countries, in the fifteenth century, bowed the neck to an absolute monarch, they forever lost the power of directing society, or performing for it any such function as that performed by the aristocracy of England.

He therefore who proposes to establish either in America or continental Europe the aristocratic liberty of England does but delude himself, and all who follow in his steps. To christendom, to the world, outside the single little island of Britain, the issue is, the *absolute despotism of one man* or the *democratic liberty of the United States*. With the

latter England will never sympathize, to it, she will never give encouragement or aid, while she retains her present aristocratic constitution. If an aristocracy asks her countenance she will give it even to the slave-holding, woman-whipping aristocracy of the United States. She allies herself with the upstart despotism which rules in France, though in the person of a despised and hated scion of the Bonapartes, because, though sincere in nothing else, it is sincere in its hostility to popular rights and to democratic equality whether in France or Italy. She will favor an aristocratic liberty, which is and ever must be quite impracticable in any other spot on earth, and which may not be possible even in her own island for another quarter of a century, but she will frown on that democratic liberty, which alone is possible to the human race. This is the England of the present and must be the England of the future, till she overturns her aristocracy and her church, and accepts for herself the doctrine of the equal rights of man.

I will also add, that I regard the present conflict in our country as involving, not only the cause of liberty here, but in England also. The freedom which England now enjoys was in a great degree wrought out for her in our own revolutionary struggle. We conquered not only liberty for ourselves, but for her also. I am persuaded that the same thing is to happen again, that English liberty is again to be achieved on American soil. There is to day a band of noble men—noble in soul though not noble born—in that country, who know this well; who feel that every triumph of the Federal cause is a triumph of liberty in England; that if we succeed, the friends of freedom in Britain, now prophesying in sack-cloth, will again have the ear of the nation, and the days of aristocratic privilege and ecclesiastical domination will be ended.

Now, the London Times, the Saturday Review, and other organs of the governing classes have it all their own way. Democracy covered with shame by its past unnatural and

unwilling connection with the unspeakable atrocities and barbarisms of negro-slavery, and even made to appear frightful and appalling through its association with the present sanguinary conflict, finds few in England and in Europe "so poor to do it reverence." But if we succeed, as we trust in God we shall, in destroying, root, and branch, and seed, that poisonous tree which our former English rulers planted here against our will, and in establishing peace and freedom from ocean to ocean, over all the Great Republic, and the years of our peace and prosperity shall again roll on their unbroken course, the enemies that have denounced and derided us, and mocked at our calamity will be covered with shame and confusion, and forever branded as prophets of lies by the public opinion of christendom; and that system of class privilege and ecclesiastical domination, in the interest of which all these falsehoods have been perpetrated, will fall and utterly perish under the indignant rebuke of a liberated world.

I am not an enemy of England, nothing can ever make me so. I abhor her position in reference to our present conflict, and regard it with mingled contempt for its meanness, and indignation for its criminality. But I love her still as the mother of freedom, and believe she will yet share that glorious inheritance, which God is working out for us and our children, through the terrible agonies of the present. We are too closely bound by the ties of a common language and a common literature, to permit democratic freedom to reign on this continent from ocean to ocean, without overturning the tyranny of class privilege in Britain. I am not in favor of provoking any war with that nation. God forbid. If it be possible, as much as lieth in us, let us live peaceably with her and with all mankind. But the millions of her own oppressed poor silently protest against our permitting the proud aristocracy that now domineers over them to over-ride our rights, or trample on the smallest portion of our independence. Let it be understood that this is not

possible. We have conquered our independence once, let us maintain it forever.

Above all let us maintain our moral independence. Let us dismiss all this restless solicitude about what Englishmen may think and say of us. If the views of this discourse are sound, we may know that as a nation they cannot judge us candidly and fairly if they would. Let us not expect what we ought to know "a priori" cannot happen. It is as natural for a man who is in sympathy with the aristocracy of England to look on America in a spirit of disparagement and sneer, as for a bull-dog to growl. Let us not be angry at the animal for acting out his own nature and instincts. Let us build on the everlasting foundation of freedom and the equal rights of man, and knowing that other nations, that are building on a very different foundation, cannot sympathize with us, or wish our work to prosper, let us dismiss all solicitude about the opinions of contemporaries, and appeal our cause to the judgment of posterity, and of a righteous God.





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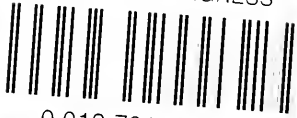








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